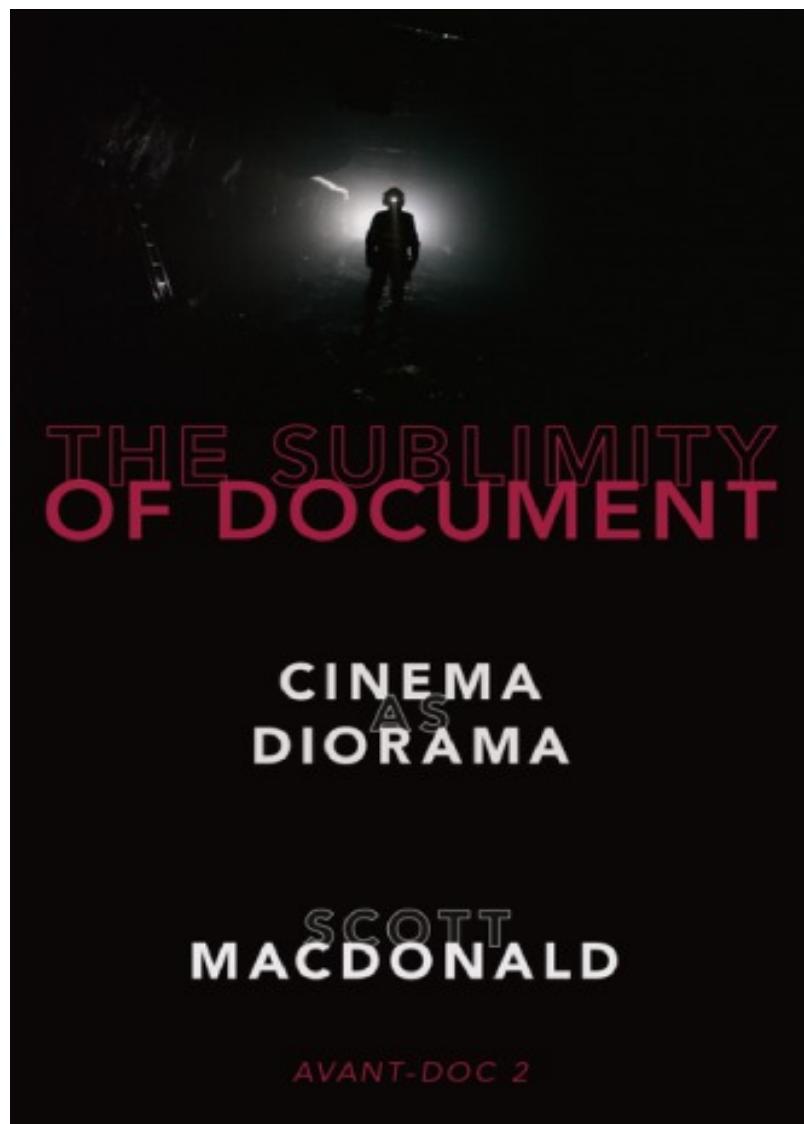


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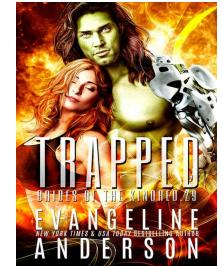


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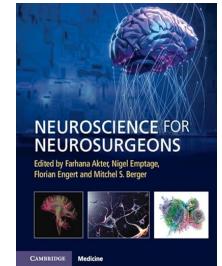
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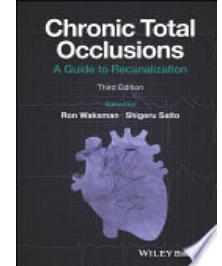
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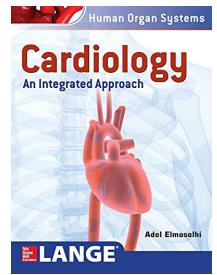
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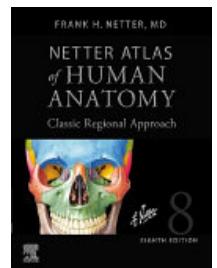
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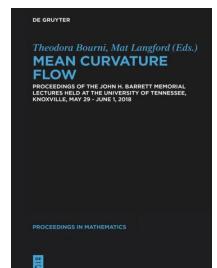
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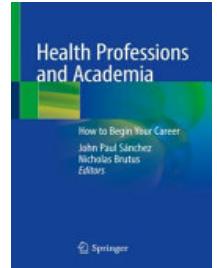
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THE SUBLIMITY OF DOCUMENT

CINEMA
AS
DIORAMA

SCOTT
MACDONALD

AVANT-DOC 2

■ The Sublimity of Document

The Sublimity of Document

Cinema as Diorama

(Avant-Doc 2)

Scott MacDonald

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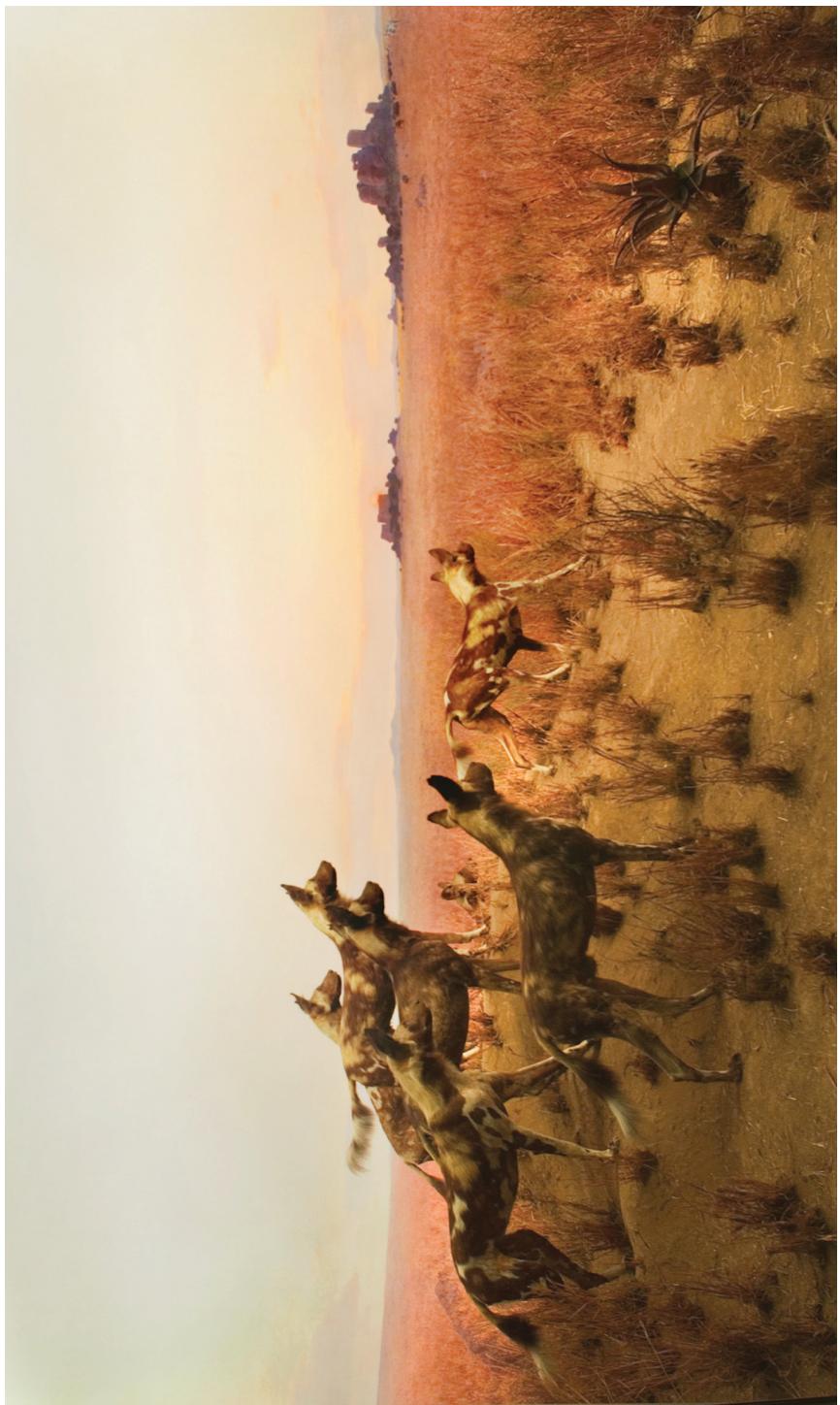
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Color Figure 1 The Akeley Hall of African Mammals at the American Museum of Natural History. American Museum of Natural History Library. 160120_6387-edit.jpg.

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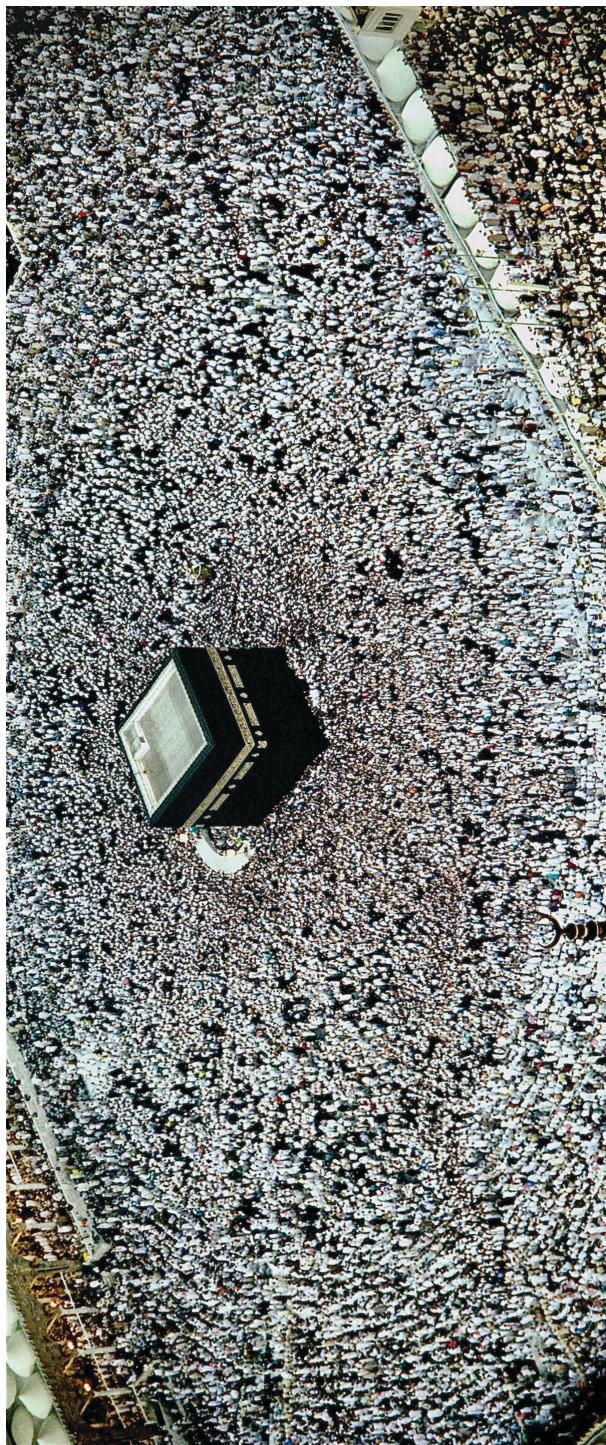
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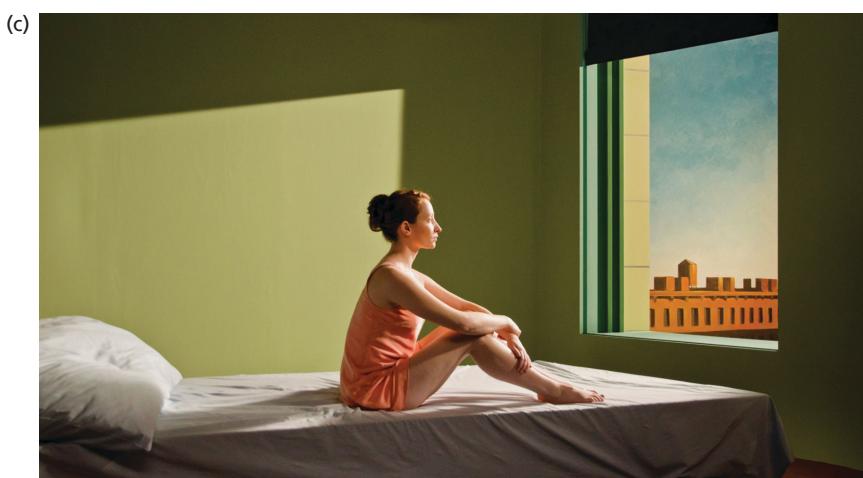
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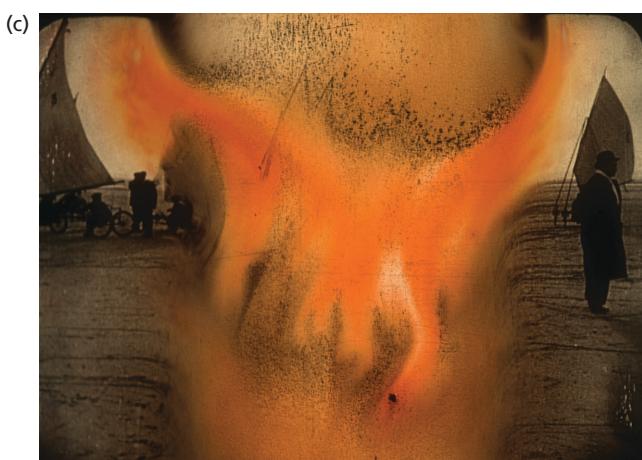
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Color Figure 11 Installation of Janet Biggs's *Afar* (2016), produced for the SCAD Museum of Art in Savannah, Georgia. Courtesy Janet Biggs.

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I saw
A stirring in that staghorn sumach,
And caught a rabbit's eye.—
What are these crazy quizzings? Pshaw!
Good day to you!

ALWYN

Stay yet!
Once more look yonder, where my comrade stands,
Turning to take the gentle, outreached hands
Of our shy sister: Can you see
No timid form beside him?

STARK

Perfectly
My eyes discern
A man, who peers within the morning mist,
And murmurs to the air,
And smiles, as if he held sweet converse there.
In short, I see a sentimentalist.
I am not of that ilk.

[*Calling*]—Ho, there!—Holá!
Wait with my dogs: I'm coming.

ALWYN

Stay, and learn
What we ourselves have only learned through quiet
Listening. So long, in rampant haste,
Your dizzy soul has chased
The spinning dollar sign which stars your zodiac,
That you have lost the track
Of paths serene, and pace God's world in riot
Of blinding gold. Pause, for this little space!
Put off that blood-emblazed regalia

Gorgeous with death,
And draw with me one meditative breath
Here in the temple of cool Tacita.

STARK

[*Who has listened with half-amused curiosity.*]

Ah—Tacita? And who may that be, friend?

ALWYN

One lovelier than you have yet set eyes on.

SHY

Go, Quercus: Pray our mistress to attend.

[*QUERCUS goes out.*]

STARK

Mistress! Is she a maid?—and lovely, too?
And may this wonder dawn on my horizon
If I remain?

ALWYN

Remain—to meditate!

STARK

Why, now, you stir my fancies.
In truth, 'tis early still, and little to do
This hour. Come, I will wait
And watch with you. But mind! The nymph must be
More lovely than my eyes did ever see!

ALWYN

With loveliness more deep than eyes discover.

STARK

So, 'tis a bargain, then?

ALWYN

Sit by me here;
And if your musings cause no fear,
You shall behold her in her secret dances.

STARK

By Hercules! I'm half prepared to love her!

[He sits on the log beside ALWYN. ORNIS still stands apart, under SHY's protection. QUERCUS enters, beckoning backward into the wood.]



VIII

TACITA. ALWYN. ORNIS. STARK. (SHY. QUERCUS.)

ALWYN

Now, Tacita, shy pagan nymph, appear!

[TACITA *enters from her shrine of greenery, and pauses before them.*]

Spirit, unblind this man! Delusions blur
Inward his sight. He is a murderer,
Yet knows not he is such. Unseal
The fountains of his vision, and reveal
Yonder the sister spirit, whom so long
His blind heart strove to wrong—
Ornis: Reveal, and let him speak with her!

[*Soft music sounds, various and elusive in its rhythmic themes.*

TACITA approaches STARK, and weaves about him a dance of revelation, lulling, charming, luring him by the appeal of numberless wing-swayings and bird-dartings, for which the music suggests the song-notes. During her dance, STARK rises, bewildered, and is gradually lured and led by her toward ORNIS, before whom—at the consummation of the dance—he stands, staring.]

STARK

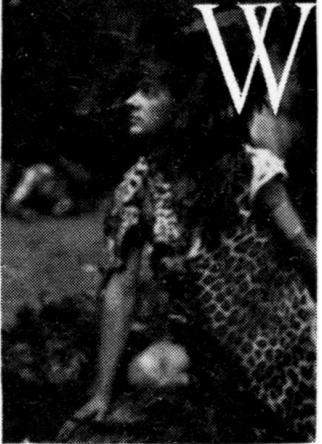
[*Rising, speaks to the music.*]

O twilight—holy dusk—dawn twitterings!
How far, how dim and hollow
You darkle over me:
Wings, wings! swift wings, shy wings, eternal wings!
Where shall I follow?
Ah, joy—jubilant melody—
And morning! Joy—I follow!
I dream, and drink from your immortal springs!

[TACITA *disappears. STARK beholds ORNIS.*]

IX

STARK. ORNIS. (ALWYN. QUERCUS. SHY.)



STARK

What are you?

ORNIS

[Appealing with half-fearful affection.]

Brother!—brother!

STARK

[With sudden cry and gesture.]

Ha, my net!

The shy bird shall be captured 'live!

[From his shoulder he looses the net, and flings it over ORNIS, seizing the meshes.]

Now, Joy,

I hold you fast!

ORNIS

[Struggling.]

Ee-ó-lee-o!

SHY

[Extricating her.]

Not yet!

ALWYN

[Seizing STARK.]

Untamed, and still unshamed! Will you destroy
The wings that raise you? Sister, speak to him!

ORNIS

My brothers—all of you! Oh, wage not war
Because of me. I fear not. Stark, you dim
The brightness of our union, greeting so
Your sister.

STARK

[Dropping his net.]

Sister?

ORNIS

Hunt no more
With lime and net: Your love shall hold me faster;
For I am Ornis.

STARK

[Fascinated.]

Ornis!

ORNIS

Dear my master!
Do you not know me? I am she
Whom first, beneath the dark, ancestral tree,
You rose upon your feet to hearken to.
By me you grew
To song and freedom. Round your olden feasts
You watched my circling flights, whereby your priests
Proclaimed their omens and their oracles;

My cranes announced your victories, my storks
Fed your hearth-fires, my silver-throated gulls
And golden hawks
Saved many your sea-towns from sore pestilence;
And my sweet night bird tuned your poets' shells
To lull sad lovers in languorous asphodels;
Yet all my influence
Shone dimmer than my beauty: my bright plumes
Lured you to squander them, till, in the fumes
Of greed, your heart forgot to cherish me,
And sold me unto death and slavery.—
Yet, master, as you will:
Lo, I am Ornis, and I love you still!

STARK

[With altered tone of yearning.]

Yet—yet it seems I never heard your voice
Till now; nor ever understood
Till now; nor paused, as now in this still wood,
To tremble and rejoice
At greeting you, my sister. I am stunned,
And wait to comprehend this wonder.

ORNIS

Ah,

You never prayed before to Tacita!
Your feet have shunned
Her gracious paths, yet only she
Can lead and show my brother Man to me.



"Lo, I am Ornis, and I love you still!"

STARK

[*Glancing at his gun.*]

Why, then,—why have I brought this instrument
Of murder here? What black intent
Clouded my mind with blood?

[*Flinging it from him.*]

Out of my hands!—My sister, can it be
That still you soar above my sanguine flood
Of passion, and forgive? Though yet I kill,
Oh, is it true indeed—you love me still?

ORNIS

Ha, put me to the test!
Show me the field that breeds your harvest pest
Of chinch or weevil,
Where all the blossoms wither with strange evil,
Or where, in filmy tents,
The hairy creepers gorge in regiments
Your budding apple boughs;
Show your ancestral elms
Gaunt limbed with leprosy, which overwhelms
Their green old age in death;
Or those swift locust clouds, whose breath
Blasts the ripe loveliness of Spring;
Show these, and more
Than these, and cry on *Ornis!* She shall bring—
From hill and shore
And plain—her wingèd flocks and warbling broods,
And swinge away their deadly multitudes.—
If service be true love, I love you, brother.

ALWYN

[*Drawing near.*]

And for her sake, so we will love each other.

[*He takes STARK's right hand.*]

SHY

[*Taking his left.*]

A greenwood partnership!

STARK

[*Pressing their hands.*]

Thanks!

SHY

[*Whispering to the faun.*]

Quercus, run!

QUERCUS

I skip,

I gambol, master. Ha!

I have a tale to tell to Tacita!

[*He leaps away.*]

ORNIS

[*As STARK tears off his headdress of plumes.*]

And those—?

STARK

STARK

For these my heart shall build a fire
Here at this shrine:

[He hangs the headdress on a tree.]

And here, as on a pyre,
I place them, with this pouch, which hides
The victims of my blind desire.
There, at sad cost,
I let them tell my pain—the votive part
Of one long lost,
Who now has found himself in nature's heart.—
Ornis, my trail divides:
There lie the ashes of the thing I was.
Henceforth, I walk with you—

[Turning to ALWYN and SHY.]

and these.

ALWYN

A compact, then, we three: that when we go
Forth from these gracious trees
Into the world, we go as witnesses
Before the men who make our country's laws,
And by our witness show
In burning words
The meaning of these sylvan mysteries:
Freedom and sanctuary for the birds!
Say, is our compact sworn?

STARK

I swear.

SHY

And I.

[Enter QUERCUS and TACITA.]

X

TACITA. QUERCUS. STARK. ORNIS. SHY. ALWYN.

STARK

[*To ORNIS.*]



Look, sister: friends are coming.
Now lead us to their shrine close by.

ORNIS

Oh, first let all make joy of this our union!
For now my glad heart, like a partridge drumming,
Calls for my mates to join us, all together,
In frolicsome communion.
Ho, Quercus, Quercus, call them!—Tacita,
Summon them with your fairy feet!

QUERCUS

[*Bounding forward.*]

Holá!

ALWYN

[*Taking from his pouch QUERCUS' pipe.*]

Call loud and long!
Here's our old pipe, to carry a new song.

[*ALWYN puts the pipe to his lips, while QUERCUS sings to it, calling to the birds. At the end, QUERCUS begs in pantomime for the pipe which ALWYN, smiling, restores to him.*]

QUERCUS

Come here, come here, you little comrades coy,
From hill and swamp and heather:
Make joy, make joy

Together!—
Tawny beak and scarlet vest,
Slant wing and sleek feather,
Bulging bill and cocking crest,
Hither!

Tumble out of nest,
Topple out of windy weather
Here, holá!

With preenings quaint,
Purple dyes and crimson paint,
Here, holá, in merry state!

Up from dew-grass, down from aerie,
Tacita—Tacita
Summons you to dedicate
Here her sanctuary!

[*While QUERCUS calls, from all sides Birds of many species and colors—like ORNIS human in form—gather, and peer from the edges of the scene. To these TACITA now beckons, and by her gesture summons to her dance, while QUERCUS plays joyously on his pipe.*]

ORNIS

Bird and faun and man and fairy,
Gather now to sanctuary!

[*TACITA first dances alone, then with QUERCUS; then, inviting and leading them all in pied procession, she marshals all away into her woodland shrine.*]

FINIS

AFTERWORD

In the original production of this masque, referred to in the *Foreword*, the sanctuary stage was devised by MR. JOSEPH LINDON SMITH in two planes—the natural and the supernatural, harmoniously blended.

The natural plane, in the foreground, was a leaf-strewn plot of earth; the supernatural, in the background, was a constructed stage some eighteen inches higher, sloping slightly upward toward the back, covered with smooth canvas, practical for dancing, so painted as to suggest a weathered outcropping of rock, overgrown in places by moss and greensward.

This constructed stage was divided from the foreground earth by the trunk of a felled maple tree, straight in line and inconspicuous in color.

In front of this dividing line, SHY and ALWYN remained always in the natural plane; behind it, ORNIS and TACITA remained always in the supernatural. Their scenes together were enacted near or beside the fallen tree trunk.

In the scene of his conversion, STARK was lured into the higher plane by TACITA; while QUERCUS alone among the characters skipped back and forth from one plane to the other.

As audience, the non-participating spectators sat in dominoes of brown, flanked on either side by the bird-participants in their pied

bird costumes. These latter watched the performance until, at the *finale*, they were summoned by QUERCUS upon the constructed stage.

There, when all had been marshalled, entered the CARDINAL BIRD [enacted by MR. HERBERT ADAMS, the sculptor], accompanied by two small scarlet-tanager acolytes [boys], bearing great candles, to light a crimson cushion held by the Cardinal. On the cushion lay an open scroll.

This scroll, itself a sheet of parchment-like paper from the original press of Benjamin Franklin, had been inscribed by MR. STEPHEN PARRISH with a *Sonnet-Epilogue*,



Cardinal Bird and
Hummingbird

composed by the author of the masque and signed by all of its participants, with their real names opposite the species of birds they severally impersonated.

Moving slowly forward to music till he stood before PRESIDENT and MRS. WILSON, where they sat near the centre of the first row of the audience, the CARDINAL BIRD, with simple dignity, read from the scroll this

EPILOGUE

Addressed to MRS. WOODROW WILSON:

Lady, WHEREAS your gentle patronage
And presence have to-night so favored us
In this our ritual, that you have thus
Lent to our earnest cause a double gage:
One gracious daughter to make glad our stage
And one to make its theme harmonious
With song—whose sire now makes illustrious
The larger theatre of our living age:

Therefore, ere yet the privilege be spent
Which grants our thoughts the spell of human words,
We vow by you, here in this tranquil wood,
Our loyal love to him—the President,
Whose heart has heard the call of the wild birds,

And sign ourselves

Your Servants, with gratitude.

Having thus presented the scroll, the CARDINAL BIRD with his ACOLYTES retired to the stage, where the final dance and procession of the bird-participants then took place.

The Programme of the performance [omitting that part of the *Prelude* already printed on pages xix and xx] was as follows:

UNDER THE PATRONAGE OF
MRS. WOODROW WILSON
AND THE FOLLOWING COMMITTEE

MRS. HERBERT ADAMS
MRS. C. C. BEAMAN
ERNEST HAROLD BAYNES
KENYON COX
PERCY MACKAYE
MAXFIELD PARRISH
CHARLES A. PLATT
MRS. GEORGE RUBLEE
LOUIS EVAN SHIPMAN
JOSEPH LINDON SMITH
MRS. AUGUSTUS SAINT-GAUDENS

MEMBERS OF THE MERIDEN BIRD CLUB JOIN WITH RESIDENTS OF
CORNISH, NEW HAMPSHIRE, AND THEIR FRIENDS, TO PRESENT A
MASQUE IN THE INTEREST OF AMERICAN WILD BIRD PROTECTION

PRELUDE

SONG "THE HERMIT THRUSH"

SUNG BY MISS MARGARET WILSON

THE SONG COMPOSED BY FREDERICK S. CONVERSE TO WORDS BY
ARVIA MACKAYE, WHO ENACTS THE PART OF THE LITTLE GIRL

MERIDEN, NEW HAMPSHIRE:
SEPTEMBER 12, 1913

SANCTUARY

A BIRD MASQUE

BY PERCY MACKAYE

PERFORMED UNDER THE FOLLOWING DIRECTION

STAGE PRODUCTION BY JOSEPH LINDON SMITH
DANCING BY JULIET BARRETT RUBLEE
ORIGINAL MUSIC BY FREDERICK S. CONVERSE
PROPERTIES BY WILLIAM HOWARD HART
PROGRAMME DESIGN BY KENYON COX

PERSONS IN THE MASQUE
IN THE ORDER OF THEIR APPEARANCE

QUERCUS	FAUN	JOSEPH LINDON SMITH
ALWYN	POET	PERCY MACKAYE
SHY	NATURALIST	ERNEST HAROLD BAYNES
TACITA	DRYAD	JULIET BARRETT RUBLEE
ORNIS	BIRD SPIRIT	ELEANOR WILSON
STARK	PLUME HUNTER	WITTER BYNNER
	ATTENDANT	LEONARD COX

EPILOGUE

THE CARDINAL BIRD	HERBERT ADAMS
FIRST ACOLYTE	ROBIN MACKAYE
SECOND ACOLYTE	PAUL SAINT-GAUDENS

BIRD PARTICIPANTS IN PANTOMIME

BLUEBIRD	MRS. HERBERT ADAMS
CARDINAL GROSBEAK	MR. HERBERT ADAMS
OWL	MISS CHARLOTTE ARNOLD
BALTIMORE ORIOLE	MISS FRANCES ARNOLD
OWL	MISS GRACE ARNOLD
RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD	MR. LEROY BARNETT
GOLDFINCH	MISS BIGELOW

DOWNY WOODPECKER	MRS. ERNEST HAROLD BAYNES
DOWNY WOODPECKER	MRS. EDSON BEMIS
DOWNY WOODPECKER	MR. EDSON BEMIS
GOLDFINCH	MR. JOHN FARNUM CANN
BLUE JAY	MISS LOUISE CONVERSE
BLUE JAY	MISS VIRGINIA CONVERSE
KINGBIRD	MRS. KENYON COX
CROW	MR. KENYON COX
FLICKER	MISS CAROLINE COX
SCARLET TANAGER	MR. ALLYN COX
BLUEBIRD	MISS ANNIE H. DUNCAN
HOUSE WREN	MISS ELIZABETH EVARTS
RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET	MR. PRESCOTT EVARTS
OWL	MR. ELWIN FEY
SCARLET TANAGER	MR. CHARLES FULLER
GOLDFINCH	MRS. CONGER GOODYEAR
RUBY-CROWNED KINGLET	MISS LEONA HARDY
WOOD THRUSH	MISS RUTH HALL
EVENING GROSBEAK	MR. WILLIAM HOWARD HART
HAWK	MR. GRISWOLD HAYWOOD
KINGBIRD	MISS KING
KINGBIRD	MISS CLARA KING
BLUEBIRD	MRS. HERBERT LAKIN
YELLOW WARBLER	MISS ELEANOR LAKIN
YELLOW WARBLER	MISS HETTY LAKIN
BLUEBIRD	MISS BELLE LAVERACK
SNOW BUNTING	MRS. PERCY MACKAYE
SWALLOW	MISS HAZEL MACKAYE
HUMMINGBIRD	MISS ARVIA MACKAYE
SCARLET TANAGER	MASTER ROBIN MACKAYE

GOLDFINCH	MISS ALICE MCCLARY
BLUEBIRD	MISS ANNE PARRISH
CARDINAL BIRD	MR. STEPHEN PARRISH
RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD	MISS MARIE PARKER
HERMIT THRUSH	MRS. MAXWELL PERKINS
GOLDFINCH	MR. ROGER PLATT
SCARLET TANAGER	MR. WILLIAM PLATT
RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD	MISS EDNA RAPALLO
GOLDFINCH	MISS HADLEY RICHARDSON
BLUE HERON	MR. GEORGE RUBLEE
LOVE BIRD	MRS. LOUIS SAINT-GAUDENS
SCARLET TANAGER	MR. PAUL SAINT-GAUDENS
WOOD THRUSH	MISS SCUDDER
BLUEBIRD	MISS ELLEN SHIPMAN
INDIGO BUNTING	MASTER EVAN SHIPMAN
WOODPECKER	MISS FRANCES SMITH
WOODPECKER	MISS REBECCA SMITH
BALTIMORE ORIOLE	MISS CORDELIA TOWNSEND

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INVITATIONS, MISS ANNIE H. DUNCAN

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MR. WILLIAM HOWARD HART
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TRANSCRIBER'S NOTES

1. moved page [2](#) to [end](#).
2. Silently corrected typographical errors.
3. Retained anachronistic and non-standard spellings as printed.

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BIRD MASQUE ***

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